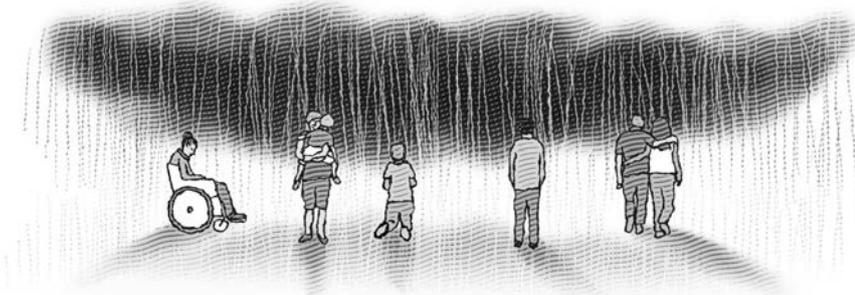


# Times of Loss



## SABBATH—MAY 25

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Mark 5:22–24; 1 Peter 5:6, 7; Genesis 37:17–28; Luke 16:13; 1 Corinthians 15:26.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Even more than that, I think of everything as worth nothing. It is so much better to know Christ Jesus my Lord. I have lost everything for Him. And I think of these things as worth nothing so that I can have Christ” (Philippians 3:8, NLV).



**Look at all the loss that came from just one wrong choice!**

**WHAT HAPPENED WHEN ADAM AND EVE** ate the forbidden fruit? They lost their perfect life. They became selfish. They blamed each other. They were mad at each other. They wanted to control each other too.

After the Fall, Adam and Eve saw death for the first time. They saw beautiful flowers die. Then, God used the skins of animals to make clothes for Adam and Eve. God said Adam and Eve were not allowed to eat from the tree of life anymore. Adam and Eve also lost their perfect garden home. Years later, they lost their son Abel. Cain, their other son, killed him. Adam and Eve were deeply sad. Then finally, after many long years of life, one of them died. Did Adam die first? Or Eve? The Bible does not say. But one of them was left to live alone. Look at all the loss that came from just one wrong choice!

Yes, we all know that loss hurts us. Loss is very real. Most of us feel the most pain when we lose someone in our family.

This week, we will continue to look at family life. We will look at the different times of loss in the family.

## LOSS OF HEALTH (Mark 5:22–24)

It has been a long time since Adam and Eve ate fruit from the tree of life. Our sick and weak bodies show just how long it has been! Sooner or later, we all grow old and die. Many of us lose our health along the way too.

It is painful to lose your health. But it is even more painful when we watch someone we love grow sick. Are you a parent whose child is sick? Maybe you wished you were the one who was sick, not your child. But God does not give us that choice.

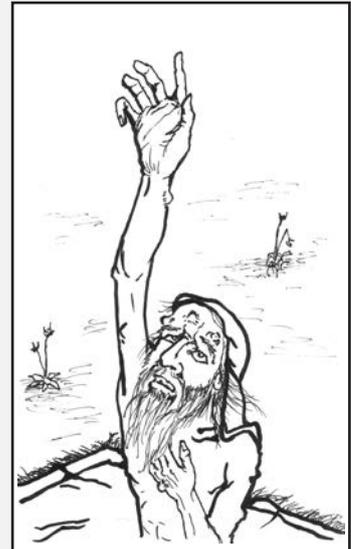
**Read the stories in Mark 5:22–24, 35–43; Matthew 15:22–28; Luke 4:38, 39; and John 4:46–54. What is the same about all these stories?**

In each story, we see a family member asking Jesus to help someone in their families.

Yes, we feel pain because of sin. Sin brought death. But sin also brought pain and sickness too. We may feel angry. We may even want to shout, “My God, my God, why have you left me alone? You are too far away to save me. You are too far away to hear my moans [cries for help]” (Psalm 22:1, ICB). David took his questions, anger, and pain to God. We should do the same thing.

We will never really understand sickness until Jesus finally beats death at His Second Coming. But while we wait for that to happen, we can learn some important truths about pain and sickness from the Bible. Job’s pain was awful. But it helped him grow closer to God. Job explains: “ ‘In the past I heard about you, but now I have seen you with my own eyes’ ” (Job 42:5, ERV). Paul was in pain for a long time. The way he behaved shows us that our suffering can make us better people. Our pain can help us learn how to comfort other people in pain too. Pain also can teach us how to be loving to other people who are hurting. Pain can help us to be better servants for God too (2 Corinthians 1:3–5). But we must be careful. We must not let our pain break our hold on God.

**What promises can we hold onto in faith when we or other people are suffering? Why is Jesus’ pain on the cross very important to us during these times? What does the Cross teach us about God’s love? Why does His love never fail us when we are sick?**



**Job’s pain was awful. But it helped him grow closer to God.**

## LOSS OF TRUST—PART 1 (1 Peter 5:6, 7)



**Learning to trust again is the same as going on a long trip. You must take one step at a time.**

Have you ever broken someone's trust? Or has someone ever broken a promise to you? It is hard to trust again when someone lies to us or breaks a promise. It hurts when we feel we cannot trust that person anymore. It is bad when a friend breaks our trust. But it is worse when a family member hurts us.

Sometimes, it seems that the easiest thing to do is run away from the person who hurt us. We may think that building trust again is too much work. What happens when the person who hurt you is a family member? Or even your own husband or wife? It is even harder to forgive and trust that person again, right? But marriage can teach us an important lesson. It can teach us how to build trust again.

**When your trust is broken, how can you save your friendship or marriage? How can you heal and learn to trust again? For the answers, read 1 Peter 5:6, 7; 1 John 4:18; James 5:16; and Matthew 6:14, 15.**

Learning to trust again is the same as going on a long trip. You must take one step at a time. The trip starts with the truth. You must be honest about what you did to hurt someone or what someone did to hurt you.

When someone cheats on you, what is the first step you must take to heal? The person who cheated must confess to you what he or she did wrong. Then that person must be willing to be honest and open with you about what happened. He or she must not lie about anything or hide the truth. More lies will destroy the trust you are trying to build again. And the second time your trust is broken, it will be even harder to heal than the first time.

Building trust again takes time. You must be patient. The worse the sin, the longer it will take for your heart to heal. Sometimes you will feel that you are not healing at all! One day, you will be filled with hope. Then the next day, you will want to give up and run away. But many people have been able to rebuild broken marriages. With God's help, their marriages have become stronger and even happier than before.

**How can your healing a marriage help you heal other connections with people that are broken?**

**LOSS OF TRUST—PART 2 (Genesis 37:17–28)**

What breaks our trust in our families? Our trust is broken when a family member hurts our bodies. Family members hurt other family members when they hit them, touch them in the wrong way, or say mean things. Then the hurt family members no longer feel safe in their own homes. Scientists say that the home is the most dangerous place on earth! Sadly, many Christian homes are dangerous places.

**The Bible includes stories about families who hurt other family members. What do you think about these stories? How do they make you feel? Why do you think God put these stories in the Bible?**

**Genesis 37:17–28** \_\_\_\_\_

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**2 Samuel 13:1–22** \_\_\_\_\_

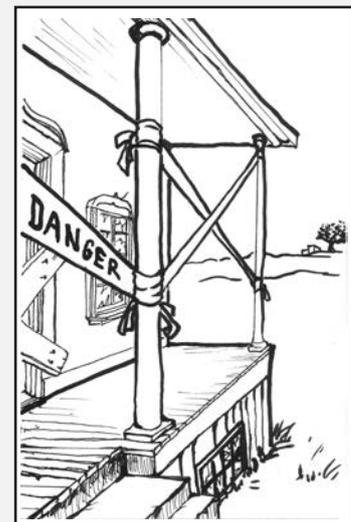
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**2 Kings 16:3; 2 Kings 17:17; 2 Kings 21:6** \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do some people beat and hit other people? Or touch them in the wrong way? They do it because they want to control people. This behavior is evil. There is no excuse for it. Drinking, stress, sex, or anger are not excuses for bad behavior. Do not blame the person that was hurt either. The people who get hurt do not cause their attackers to hurt them. People who hurt others twist love. That is wrong. “Love [does not] hurt others [people]” (Romans 13:10, ERV). People who beat or hit other people are sick. They need help. But they cannot change until they go get help. First, they must say that they have a problem. Then they must open their hearts to God. God can help them to stop hurting other people. He can help attackers to stop their bad behavior. God will help these people make things right with the people they hurt. God’s love will heal their evil hearts. Then God will help them to love other people in the right way (read Ephesians 3:20).

**What words of comfort and hope can you share with someone who has been beaten? Why is it very important to help that person feel safe and cared for?**



**Scientists say that the home is the most dangerous place on earth!**

**WHEN WE LOSE OUR FREEDOM (Luke 16:13)**

God is the only One who knows how many people fight against a bad habit. Do you know that scientists can see the part of our brain where our bad habits are located? But scientists do not know exactly what causes our bad habits. Our knowing where our bad habits are located in the brain is not the same thing as freeing us from those habits.

Bad habits are hard on everyone. Not just the person who has the bad habit. Our bad habits hurt our family members. They hurt our parents, our husbands or wives, and our children. Every member of a family suffers when someone in the family is controlled by a bad habit.

What are some bad habits? Drugs, drinking, smoking, sex, even food. But what makes these habits bad? The answer is that the people doing these things cannot stop. They know their behavior is hurting them. But they keep doing it anyway. Then they become slaves to the bad habit. In the end, they lose their freedom. Peter explains what bad habits are. Bad habits are the same as false teachers who “promise to give freedom to these new believers” (2 Peter 2:19, NIV). But these teachers are slaves to sin. Peter warns us that “people are slaves to anything that controls them” (2 Peter 2:19, NIV).



**People become slaves to their bad habits.**

**What things can cause people to start bad habits? For the answers, read Luke 16:13; Romans 6:16; James 1:13–15; and 1 John 2:16.**

Sin and bad habits are not always the same things. You can do something that is a sin. But it is not a bad habit. True, if you do that sin enough times, the sin can become a bad habit. That is why we should ask God to help us stop the sin before it turns into a bad habit. The only real answer to sin and bad habits is a new heart. Only God can give us that. “Those [people] who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed their sinful [full of sin] desires [wishes] to his cross. They don’t [do not] want these things anymore” (Galatians 5:24, NIV). What does it mean to nail our old selves and habits to the cross? Paul explains: “Let every part of you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not allow your weak thoughts to lead you into sinful [wrong] actions” (Romans 13:14, NIV). So, we must do what Paul says. We must nail our bad habits to the cross. Then we can live for Jesus (Romans 6:8–13).

## LOSS OF LIFE (1 Corinthians 15:26)

As humans, we know death is real. We read about death. We see death. Maybe we almost died when we were young.

**Read 1 Corinthians 15:26. How does this verse explain what death is? Why does this verse talk about death in this way?**

Death is an enemy. We learn this hard truth for ourselves when someone we love dies. But in a way, those who died believing in Jesus are much better off than we are. Why? Because they no longer feel sad or feel any pain. When God wakes them from the dead, the next thing they will see is Jesus. “Death is not a problem for the believer. . . . Death is the same as sleep. It is a short time of silence and darkness. While we live, Jesus makes us one with God. Now ‘Christ [Jesus] is your life. When he comes again, you will share in his glory’ [Colossians 3:4, ICB].”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 787, adapted.

This life of pain and sorrow ends for everyone who dies. But the living continue to feel sad because of death.

It is normal to feel sad when someone we love dies. But not everyone will feel sad in the same way when someone they love dies. The first thing that most people feel is shock. They may have trouble accepting the death. Shock is really your mind’s way of trying to protect you from what happened. Shock may last up to two or three months. After the shock is over, you may think about your loved one all the time. This time may last from six months to a year.

Then you will feel deep sadness. This feeling can last for a very long time. It can be the most painful time of all. During this time, you slowly learn to accept the loss of your loved one. You may feel many different things at this time: anger, guilt, sorrow, sadness, and worry. Do not try to get rid of all your pain or your memories. That is not your goal or purpose. Finally, at the end of this time, you will want to start doing things again in life that you used to do.

**Read Romans 8:31–39; Revelation 21:4; and 1 Corinthians 15:52–57. What hope and comfort do these verses give you?**



Death is the same as sleep. It is a short time of silence and darkness.



**Jesus came to free us from all bad habits that make us slaves.**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** Many people suffer deeply because of their own bad habits. They become slaves to sin. They lose their money, jobs, health, and freedom. But Jesus came to make us free from sin. He came to free us from all bad habits that make us slaves. “‘If the Son makes you free, you are really free’” (John 8:36, ERV). Jesus also promises us that He always will be with us (Matthew 28:20; Isaiah 43:2). So, we do not have to fight this war against sin alone. We must remember that Jesus fights the war for us (1 Samuel 17:47). Jesus promises to give us victory (1 Peter 1:3–9). Today, you can start to win the war against sin. Jesus will help you win the war against any bad habit. God wants you to be free. That does not mean you will not need to fight hard. Sometimes, you may fall. But there is good news. Do not give up on God. And God will not give up on you. Also, do not be afraid to get help from a professional when you need it. You go to a doctor when your body is sick. God works with your doctor to help make you well. In the same way, there also are doctors who help people with their behavior. God can work with these mind-health professionals to help free you from your bad habits too.

“At times, our lives will be hard. During those times, we should run to God. We should believe He will help us. God is mighty and strong. He can save us and free us. Do you really want God’s blessing? Then you must ask for it. He will give it to you. It is our job to pray. Yes, we need to pray. But let us not forget to praise God too. We also should thank God more than we do. God is the Giver of all our blessings. We also need to be grateful. We should think often about the mercy God shows us. We should praise His holy name more too. We should praise Him during hard times when we are sad.”—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 2, page 268, adapted.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① First Corinthians 13:5, ERV, helps us understand what forgiveness means: “Love does not remember wrongs done against it.” Why is forgiveness important when we are trying to heal broken friendships and marriages? How do Matthew 6:12–15 and Matthew 18:21, 22 help us answer this question?
- ② How does our thinking about God’s mercy help us heal during a sad or hard time in life?
- ③ Maybe someone you know lost a loved one. Or maybe you know someone whose trust was broken. What can your church family do to help?